

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

Rm. 214-City Hall

Newark, N. J.

October 28, 1960

DEAR COMMISSIONER:

Enclosed is a copy of Consultant Associates final report to the City of Newark on its Weequahic stabilization experiment. There is a good deal of information contained in it which we should digest before making plans for further work in Weequahic or other of Newark's neighborhoods.

Because I will be in California and Cincinnati from the 7th through the 19th of November, Al Mark has suggested that we hold our next Commission meeting on Wednesday, November 30 at 8 P.M. in Room 100. I hope this change meets with your approval.

Mayor Carlin is conducting a town meeting in conjunction with the Central Ward Neighborhood Council of the Associated Community Councils at 8 P.M. on the night of November 21st in West Kinney Junior High School. I think this meeting will be sufficiently involved with our human relations interests to warrant the attendance of every Commissioner.

Please let me know whether or not you can attend this town meeting on the 21st as well as our Commission meeting on the 30th.

I am also enclosing copies of letters sent to the Newark Sunday News and fire Director James Owens. These letters were sent on the advice of our Selections Sub-Committee which met this week to interview candidates for Walter's job. The committee consisted of Al Mark, Phil Mayer, Lawrence McCloskey and Leonard Holman, chairman, who, due to an emergency was unable to be with us.

Warmest personal regards.

Cordially yours,

Dan

Dan Anthony

DGA:rd
Enclosures

CONSULTANT ASSOCIATES CORPORATION
Long Branch, N.J.

Consultants Involved in the Program

Priscilla B. Ranschoff, Ed.D.- - - - - Project Director
Jacob L. Moreno, M.D.- - - - - Director of Sociodrama
Daniel W. Dodson, Ph.D.- - - - - Program Evaluator
James S. Winston, Ll.B. M.A.- - - - - Asst. Project Director
James M. Long, M.S.- - - - - Chief Interviewer
Harold H. Hart, B.A.- - - - - Recorder

Goals and Purposes of Project

established by

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations

1. To aid the City of Newark in avoiding tension and conflict where Negro or Puerto Rican families move into previously all white neighborhoods.
2. To develop the most effective techniques and methods for neutralizing the persistent majority mythology of:
 - A. Devaluation of property
 - B. Panic and flight only solution
 - C. Integrated neighborhoods lead to
 - (1) Dangerous social intimacies such as dating and eventually inter-marriage
 - (2) Down-grading of our socio-economic status and our prestige.
 - (3) Damaging changes in our own security and happiness.
Our needs for conformity, acceptance and belonging must be considered: we cannot risk snubbing and snobbery
3. To explore and experiment with imaginative, different and untried approaches to the peaceful transition of neighborhoods and the stabilization of those which have undergone some degree of desegregation or integration.
4. Finally, to develop a new and dynamic method of convincing the building interests, the real estate fraternity, the power structure and community leadership that housing for minorities on an equal and open occupancy basis is not only sound and good business, but also necessary for the future economic, political and social programs of our City.

Introduction

The community which served as a focal point of this project was Weequahic. Vailsburg had originally been suggested but, at the request of the Mayor's Commission, Weequahic was substituted as the target area. The primary reason for the change was that Weequahic is a section of the city where it was understood that considerable apprehension exists as a result of non-whites moving into a community which has been predominantly white. Furthermore, the situation presented a problem in its early stages rather than in a more advanced state so that an attempt could be made to cooperatively plan for the future, utilizing all the resources available in the broad field of community development and community relations.

In the field of social action research there are two types of specialists involved:

1. Those concerned with attempts to initiate change in organizational structure.
2. Those concerned with understanding organizational change.

This is another of the all too numerous examples of the gap existing between theory and practice in many aspects of life today.

In this program of social action research, highly qualified social scientists who are in the "practicing professions", those who are doing in addition to maintaining university associations, were involved.

As Ronald Lippit has stated "We have only begun the systematic codification of the working knowledge and skills necessary for the researcher to get into, and maintain himself within, the social science laboratories of functioning organizations". Without impunity, it can be stated that today

systematic quantitative measurement of change processes in a complex organizational matrix is in its infancy.

In a situation in which few practitioners have combined measurement and experimentation to search for the most significant dimensions and variables in change processes, the usual criteria upon which community programs are evaluated are not too meaningful.

In the social sciences, invention and adaptation play crucial roles. A variety of tasks in which the theoretical aspects of the social sciences have been applied to specific situations in programs of action research should provide meaningful information for use in later projects.

In undertaking such challenges, a "blue-print" type proposal is unrealistic. One of the ingredients necessary for the design of a program of social action research is a thorough understanding of the situation, the immediate objectives and the long-range goals. In this instance, we had established three immediate objectives:

1. To orient the status group of Weequahic to our program and to enlist their assistance (1) in identifying "natural leaders" who were not in status positions and (2) in cooperating with us in our efforts to stimulate the "natural leaders" into undertaking a community development program.
2. To identify a group of 16 to 20 "natural leaders" in the community who would be interested in attending a series of 10 or 12 meetings in order to (a) identify community strengths and weaknesses and (b) to acquire new skills

and techniques in working with groups.

3. To bring the two groups (the status people and the "natural leaders" together in community-centered discussion sessions, hoping to facilitate a cooperative approach to community development.

Interviews:

The first phase of the study was an attempt to select, through skilled interviewing, twenty unidentified natural leaders in the area, who hopefully, would assist in developing techniques and initiating group action which would lessen anxiety and constitute a positive approach to integration.

Selected for this interviewing were proprietors of stores, restaurants, taverns and various businesses, such as real-estate, dry cleaning, shoe repair and the like. Also interviewed were a number of individuals who were either pointed out to, or noticed by, the interviewer as having leadership potential or knowledge of the residents which would enable them to identify the natural leaders.

Approximately fifty-four such interviews were conducted.

Findings of these interviews indicated, first of all, a complete lack of leadership in the community as perceived by the residents. Cited as reasons for this predicament were, lack of interest, dearth of community organizations, and inability or unwillingness to lead on the part of individuals in public or religious office. The following are typical of the replies:

- (a) "I don't know anyone in this place who is interested in anything here. The trouble is that we don't have any leaders". (a business woman in her 40's)

- 4-
- (b) "We have no neighborhood councils or business groups concerned with further development of the community".
(a proprietor of a store in his late 20's)
 - (c) "Even the Rabbi has no influence today on conditions in this community". (proprietor of a small business, a resident of Weequahic for 40 years, about 60 years of age)
 - (d) "Even the ward boss isn't a leader anymore". (an oldtimer, retired)
 - (e) "None of the young people are stupid enough to stay around here. All that's left are us oldsters and we're too tired to lead anything". (a retired business man, formerly an officer of the Chamber of Commerce)

The interviews also served to substantiate the premise that the influx of non-whites into Weequahic has been building up an atmosphere of anxiety and fear in some of the residents. A number of individuals referred to "the recent crime-wave" which has made them fearful of hold-ups, muggings and other forms of physical assault. Sample replies were:

- (a) "I have to close my store by six because of the hold-ups on Osborne Terrace". (proprietor of a dry cleaning establishment in his late 60's)
- (b) "We have had a lot of crimes around here lately. I know three people who were mugged recently". (a man in his early 50's)

- (c) "Some people over on Leslie Street were mugged last week and a neighbor, a close friend of mine, was physically assaulted on Hawthorne Avenue". (a middle aged housewife)
- (d) "This isn't a handkerchief making a bulge in my pocket. I'll take care of myself". (a middle-aged business man)

On the other hand, some residents showed an awareness of the timeless nature of this problem in Weequahic where the population has been continually changing through the years. Typical of their comments are:

- (a) "There is nothing new about a changing population in Weequahic. Originally there was an emigration of German, then they were replaced by Jewish families. Now the Negroes are moving in". (a man in his late 50's or early 60's)
- (b) "I've seen lots of changes in this community and I hope to live to see a lot more. I can't remember a time when the population here wasn't changing, It's bound to happen". (a man about 43 years old)
- (c) "This transition is true in lots of places. Here we saw the Germans move in, then the Jews and now the Negroes and the Puerto Ricans will start moving in and they'll push the Negroes out". (an elderly gentleman)

Characteristic of many of the interviews were references to "City

Hall" and its responsibility in meeting the problems of Weequahic today. Some of the comments were complimentary, others critical. Sample comments were:

- (a) "The Mayor is doing a good job. The taxes are too high but this situation wouldn't change under a new form of government".
(the father of a 17 year old high school student)
- (b) "People used to go to a ward boss for help in getting a job. This is how the bosses gained votes in return for favors. This isn't true under the present set-up, and it's a good thing". (an attorney, about to retire)
- (c) "The police are doing a good job. They have been patrolling this neighborhood more regularly and this has had a stabilizing effect generating more confidence in both the white and colored families in the neighborhood". (a physician)
- (d) "I have given over forty hours of my time to 'city hall' and one commission after another. What happened? Nothing! I'm not going to waste any more of my time". (a proprietor, about 45 years of age)
- (e) "The commissioners take an oath of office, don't they? Then why don't they do something about this situation instead of shining the shoes of all the guys in 'City Hall'".

Some of the persons interviewed spoke, sometimes feelingly, about the dearth of strong community organizations in Weequahic. Typical of the comments are:

- (a) "The trouble with this community is that all of the business groups and neighborhood councils are dead. If they are not dead, they either do nothing or set out to fight some specific cause. Working with groups like that is a waste of time". (a very young and apparently successful businessman)
- (b) " I know about the Osborne Terrace Association. It started out alright but it's not so active now". (a middle aged technician)
- (c) "Our chamber of commerce has been dead for years. Now it's in bankruptcy and that's where it belongs, as I see it". (a middle aged banker)
- (d) " The men who could do something for us in our local organization don't give a damn about Weequahic; They are big shots! They work in Newark; they are citizens of Newark. That's where they spend their energy and that's all they care about". (drug store manager, early 40's)

Counteracting the negative or fearful attitudes of some of the residents were others, at the same "grass roots" level, who showed signs of community strength. They spoke of acceptance and adjustment in Weequahic's changing situation, even hope that the change might bring about improvement in the community. Sample comments:

- (a) "Everyone could adjust to change if they wanted to".
(a man in his late 20's)

- (b) "My wife and I have learned to accept change. we like city life and we like Weequahic". (middle aged mechanic whose wife works for an industrial concern)
- (c) "There is a better class of colored people moving into this community. They are buying homes under (sic) the \$20,000 or more. I think they will improve conditions. They are interested in working and living as residents of a community". (restauranteur in his early 30's)

The complete lack of leadership in Weequahic, as perceived by all the individuals interviewed, made it necessary to discard the idea of developing a sociogram which might be used in the process of selecting natural leaders. So, additional steps were taken in the hope of finding leaders through other sources.

The first step of the second phase of the study was to draw up a profile, or profiles, of the type, or types, of individuals most likely to be concerned about stabilizing and improving the community.

The profiles eventually drawn up were based on information obtained from industry, educators and outstanding leaders in community development, and from members of the status group in Weequahic. For instance, the investigators used the data from research projects conducted by General Electric in efforts to determine what factors were of primary importance in evaluating communities in their program of company decentralization. The investigators studied the findings of university seminars in the general area of community evaluation and conducted personal interviews with active members of such organizations as the National Council of Churches, the

Near East Foundation, International Cooperation Association and the Farmers Union.

Examples of the profiles drawn up as a result of these studies and investigations were as follows:

- (a) Family with young children
- (b) Family owning, and proud of, their home.
- (c) Family, with one or more members gainfully employed, living within its budget.
- (d) Family participating in more than one of the following community activities: business, church, civic, school, social, family.

Another step towards locating potential leaders was undertaken and accomplished through the cooperation of Newark industry. Certain companies, with which the consultants had personal contacts, (including a dairy, a life insurance company, a department store and a manufacturing company) gave the investigators lists of such employees residing in the Weequahic area. The most interesting result of this review was that of all the names on the list of Weequahic residents compiled from these sources, 80% had moved away, were in the process of moving or planned to move in the near future.

A third attempt to locate potential leaders was made with the cooperation of medical specialists who have patients residing in Weequahic. Believing that the length of the doctor-patient relationship was important, orthopedic surgeons were selected as a target. Two orthopedic specialists of renown, both born and raised in Newark (one in Weequahic area), spent many hours with the consultants reviewing their lists of patients. It is important to note that both of these surgeons were quite surprised at the

number of patients who had moved away from the Weequahic area in the past year or two.

Finally, the consultants turned to similar methods, if not identical, to those described by Irwin T. Saunders of Harvard (American Sociological Review, Volume XXV (1), February 1960) in an attempt to develop a community social profile. This was unsuccessful due, once again, to the apparent lack of leadership in the community.

Meetings:

Following the informal interviews, the project was presented (in a briefing session) to the members of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations. Some excerpts from the interviews were presented at that time, and the ensuing discussion was an interesting one, highlighting several meaningful facts:

1. The members of the Commission did not believe that there was an unusual amount of "mugging" or cases of assault in Weequahic.
2. The consultants were not aware of the existence of a Weequahic Community Council.
3. There was disagreement among members of the Commission regarding a statement quoted by a consultant concerning "the large number of vacant stores on Bergen Street."

Advisory Committee Meeting

The meeting with the status group (advisory council) was held February 3, 1960, at the YMHA on Chancellor Avenue at 8:30 P.M. The group invited to this meeting consisted of officials or representatives of the following community organizations:

1. Schools
2. Parent Teachers Association
3. Hospitals
4. Churches and Temples
5. Library
6. City of Newark
7. National Association for Advancement of Colored People
8. National Conference of Christians and Jews
9. American Jewish Committee
10. American Jewish Congress
11. Anti-Defamation League
12. Essex County Intergroup Council
13. Urban League of Essex County
14. Mayor's Commission on Group Relations
15. Department of Health and Welfare
16. Police Department
17. Fire Department
18. Newark Housing Authority
19. Real Estate Owners Association
20. Newark Commission on Neighborhood Conservation and
Rehabilitation
21. Recreation Department
22. Boys Club
23. Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association
24. Weequahic Community Council

Several of the consultants were introduced to the group by members of the Commission. The long-range objective of the project was explained to the group, namely: "To develop effective techniques and methods of assisting community residents in planning for and accepting change which is inevitable in any society".

The group was asked to assist in the realization of a more immediate goal, the identification of "natural leaders" (people who exercised some degree of leadership without holding a status position - unelected or unappointed leaders), who would have sufficient interest in the community to attend a series of about twelve meetings to define objectives and, while working toward these objectives, acquire skills and techniques in working with groups. The theory behind this approach was described clearly by H. Clay Tate in his book, Building a Better Home Town:

"Decentralization is training a new group of leaders, men with a social as well as an economic perspective, men who understand how to live with, as well as in, communities. Men who are eager for responsibility, who enjoy freedom, who want nothing better than the right to succeed or fail".

This is one approach to the problem of people running away from the problems of their own communities to seek Utopia elsewhere: help them to acquire the skills they need, when they become aware of the need, to stay at home and improve their own communities.

The group was divided into small discussion groups (buzz groups) and asked to do three things:

1. To consider the possibility that they are more closely identified with the City of Newark than with the Weequahic Community.
2. To discuss whether or not there is too large a gap between themselves (the elected or appointed leaders) and the other residents of the community.
3. To suggest names of individuals who might be included in the leadership training group.

In the discussion which followed the feed-back from the discussion groups, several pertinent points were emphasized.

1. The people attending the meeting did not like being referred to as "status people" or as members of a "status group".
2. Many of these people wanted to be in the leadership training group.
3. Some resentment was evident, on the part of representatives of organizations that were active in community improvement programs
4. Several individuals were conscious of community apathy, a lack of community pride and few, if any, community activities such as a Halloween Parade.
5. There appeared to be general confusion between signs and symptoms of problems and the problems themselves.

6. A few people felt that the goal should be to become citizens of the world and that community orientation was a step or more down for sophisticated individuals of 1960.
7. There was general resentment toward the consultant leading the discussion (Dr. Ranschoff) for evading the fundamental issue, integration.
8. This group wanted to be handed a blueprint for action which would solve their problems for them.

Brotherhood Week Meeting

At a request from the Commission, the consultants provided a speaker and discussion leader for a community meeting held under the aegis of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations during Brotherhood Week, on February 25, 1960, at the Weequahic High School.

Opinions expressed during the discussion indicate that residents of Weequahic are resentful of the unscrupulous techniques of real estate salesmen who are profiting by "scare selling"; that residents feel that educational facilities in the area are declining, and that play or recreational facilities are inadequate. Residents complained of a lack of challenge to high school students in particular, as a result of the stagnation of leadership and the ineffectiveness of community organizations. Feeling was expressed that it was the responsibility of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations to do something about the present situation in Weequahic. Throughout the meeting, the speaker and discussion leader (Dr. Moreno) emphasized the importance of one's feelings about critical issues in addition to the issues themselves. To demonstrate some of the ways in which people interact,

Dr. Moreno conducted a brief sociodrama, using one of the high school students as the protagonist.

The high school students in the group pointed out some key issues, high-lighting the fact that a mass exodus from Weequahic is the most important one from their frame of reference. They expressed the opinion that running away to a "Utopia" is not the answer. The inadequacy or lack of middle-income housing was discussed at some length.

In the discussion following the sociodrama, Dr. Moreno said, "You people are aware of critical problems existing in your community. If you don't want to take action, let's all go home! - - - - I am wasting my time "

The response to this stimulus was of considerable magnitude. Some responded by restating the problems, pointing out that City Hall alone could solve them. Others discussed the "high tax rate" and, in rebuttal to this, others defended the tax rate, pointing out the hidden taxes existing in many suburbs (garbage removal, water supply, etc.) Finally one member of the group pointed out that Weequahic was well represented on the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, and challenged the Commission to play a more active role in the situation. It was on this note that the meeting was adjourned with the understanding that Dan Anthony, the Executive Director of the Commission, would make arrangements for another meeting.

Meeting Jointly Sponsored by:

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations

The Weequahic Community Council

This meeting was held at the Berkeley Savings and Loan on Chancellor Avenue and Fabyan Place at 8 P.M., March 9, 1960. Following a brief

business meeting of the Council, the group was asked to rearrange the chair into a circle, and Dan Anthony explained the purpose of the meeting, namely: "that Dr. Moreno had tossed the challenge for action back into the lap of the Mayor's Commission, and that this meeting was the acceptance of that challenge".

The consultants were represented at this meeting by an observer who recorded the entire session on tape, but who did not actively participate in the meeting. In reviewing the tape recording of the previous meeting, it is our opinion that Dr. Moreno (the consultant leading the previous meeting) did not "toss the challenge for action back into the lap of the Mayor's Commission" but that he summarized the feelings of those attending the meeting and made this inference, to which no one present took exception. This may appear to the layman to be inconsequential, but sociologically and psychologically it is a crucial point. To support our contention, we again quote a statement made by Dr. Moreno which emphasizes the non-directive role he played throughout the meeting: "If you don't want to take action, let's all go home! - - - - - I am wasting my time." In response to this direct challenge from the "outside expert", members of the group responded with a plan for action which still demanded outside leadership (the Mayor's Commission). It is interesting to note that at least one member of the group rationalized this request as a, "we will do it" type of response by pointing out the number of Weequahic residents on the Commission.

Those present were asked to introduce themselves and to comment about previous meetings. Many responses appear to be meaningful to the program of action research. These can be grouped into general classifications

by the following excerpts from, or digests of quotes from meeting participants:

a. Indicative of stimulation toward action:

1. "Dishonesty of a meeting leader (a consultant) and resulting frustration".
2. "Inability to determine purpose of meeting".
3. "Getting stirred up and wondering what this is all about".
4. "Insecurity from lack of a planned approach to problem solving at both previous meetings".
5. "Resentment of being used as guinea pigs by consultants, causing frustration."

b. Recognition of the meaning of a program of social action

1. The starting point was stirring us up and getting us to wonder what this was all about.
2. A community is a cohesive group that has common interests and goals.
3. The work should be done by the member of the community with official support from professionals.
4. Maintaining independence from City Hall is essential, and we must build a fighting organization, an action group, not merely a group with human relations ideologies.
5. We tried to get the consultants to tell us what to do:
A - B - C - etc. They said that we were the only ones who could solve the problem.
6. We are looking for citizen participation and searching for some sort of a structural group.

7. Too few community residents are willing to give of themselves.

c. Positive approach to problem solving

1. Let us define the problem and get it down to the lowest common denominator.
2. If we want to solve problems, we must not run away we must stay and work to stabilize the neighborhood and maintain the high standards we have and want to keep.
3. We should find out more about Middletown, N.Y. where people learned to live in a community of all races.
4. We need an educational program to teach people how to live.
5. Realities can be faced in small block groups.
6. How do we change erroneous conceptions (prejudices) of people?
7. Education seems to be the answer, but what does that mean?
8. Is a stabilized neighborhood what we want?
9. Education offers a solution and the Block Plan might be the way to approach the problem.
10. How can we get the right people to attend meetings?
11. People must get together on common problems and get to know each other by working together to solve problems.

d. Lack of understanding (of the problem, the program, etc)

1. Enjoyed the meetings but couldn't determine the purpose.
2. Participants talked in platitudes, avoiding the real problems.
3. Too much pussy-footing.
4. A millionaire, with a desire to practice human relations, could do much to correct this situation.
5. If we could solve our problems; we could solve the world's problems.
6. Ask the Mayor for a budget of about \$10,000 to make a film to show people how to live together.
7. An official sponsorship of the program by the Mayor's Commission is very important. This is an official obligation of the Commission.

e. Symptoms described as isolated problems

1. The large number of Negro children in the public schools.
2. Concern about the possibility that our community might become a Jim Crow community.
3. How to keep the Negroes out of Weequahic or how to keep the Whites from running.
4. Ignorance and racial bias.
5. Unfamiliarity with Negroes.
6. Property damage by Negro residents.
7. Advertisements stressing inter-racial housing.

8. Scare-selling techniques of realtors
9. Cutting up of two-family houses, by Negroes, to get higher rentals needed to pay for the property.
10. An unprincipled real estate lobby.
11. Open occupancy law.
12. Lack of enforcement of housing ordinances.

Leadership Group Meetings:

The first meeting scheduled for the leadership group was Wednesday, February 17, 1960, at 8:00 P.M. in the Weequahic High School. Twenty-eight (28) individuals had stated that they would be there. Reminders were mailed to these people and personal follow-ups were made, by a member of the consulting firm, on eighteen (18) of them the day of the meeting. In spite of these efforts, only eight (8) people were present, including a consultant, an observer, and the Executive Director of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations. Only four of the five participants voiced a desire or a willingness to participate in regular weekly sessions for a period of approximately twelve (12) weeks.

Personal letters were sent to all of those who did not attend, telling them that they were missed at the last meeting and inviting them to attend the Brotherhood Week Meeting, scheduled for February the 25th.

Because of the limited attendance and the lack of orientation, to the program of social action, the time was spent reviewing the meeting of the Advisory Committee and identifying community needs. Methods of approaching the various problems presented were explored. Additional efforts were made to recruit community-minded citizens to attend future meetings of the leadership group. Since it was suggested that Wednesday might be

a bad night for such meetings to be held, the consultants agreed to send out a post-card questionnaire regarding the best night to schedule the meetings.

The next meeting of the group was scheduled to conform to the wishes of the majority of respondents to the questionnaire, and notices of the meeting were sent to thirty-five people, including six individuals who requested permission to attend the meetings at the close of the Brotherhood Week Meeting. Only four people attended this meeting, including a consultant and the Assistant Director of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, Walter Chambers.

Additional efforts were made to recruit members for this group by those who attended the meeting. New approaches were designed and tried by the consultants with the cooperation of Dan Anthony. The next meeting was to be held at an elementary school.

When the consultant reached the school, it appeared to be closed and no entrance lights were lit. By the time this problem was solved, the doors opened, and the lights turned on; it was thirty-five minutes past the scheduled time for the meeting. Only one person, other than the consultant, was there. It is possible that others came to the school or drove past it, but returned home upon observing no visible signs of activity. If this was the case, it is understandable that this experience might have influenced their interest in attending subsequent meetings. A phone call was received, at the school, by one of the group, who wanted to let us know that he would be there before the meeting adjourned. When learning of the situation, he suggested that we continue our discussion at his home.

The rest of the evening was devoted to planning a way in which

a group of community-minded citizens could be assembled to start a training course in the techniques of group leadership. The two residents of Weequahic had many suggestions, including.

1. Holding the meeting at a private home
2. Invitations to attend being issued by them rather than by :
 - a. The consultants
 - b. The office of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations
3. Refreshments to be served

As a result, the responsibility for the next meeting was delegated to these two individuals, who were given the list of individuals, compiled by the consultants and given sufficient latitude to include any other community residents whom they felt would contribute to the success of the project.

The rest of the evening was devoted to a summary of community activities which had transpired through the activation of new community groups and the reactivation of old community groups and organizations.

Subsequent efforts of recruiting a group of non-status, or non-elected, leaders proved to be as fruitless as had the previous efforts. The two regular attendees of the Leadership Group Meetings, Dan Anthony and the consultants got together in an attempt to analyze the situation.

Summary:

In projects such as this, the comment of Benjamin Franklin to his assistant is pertinent. When Mr. Franklin's assistant groaned at another failure in their multitudinous attempts to harness electricity, Mr. Franklin replied: "These experiments were not fruitless. We have learned over a

thousand things that will not work". Analogous to this situation is the fact that we learned that many of the methods of recruitment, used successfully in some situations, would not work in Weequahic. The efforts of this small group were spent in attempting to analyze the reasons for failure and to develop a new approach based upon the facts now available to us.

The basic problem was identified as the non-existence of a community in the sociological sense. The increasingly interdependent nature of our economy has changed the community concept of a generation ago, because many of the important decisions which then could be made in the local community are now made elsewhere. However, the importance of the community, as an integral part of our society, has not decreased. It is essential that we establish new lines of communication to relate the feelings of citizens expressed in the face-to-face relations at a community level, to those charged with the responsibility of the final decision-making process.

The real challenge facing us is to involve the residents of Weequahic in the reconstruction of a community, not one identical to those of the past, but one designed to meet the needs of the present and the future. The greatest possible participation of each citizen is one of our goals. Such participation should have real, identifiable consequences and must provide opportunity for considered judgment.

The basic problem in Weequahic then, as we see it, is that the community spirit of old has been lost in the impersonal urban economy and that the civic-economic cultural climate is no longer adequate to make the younger people want to stay there. The bland acceptance of bigness on the part of the older residents is described by some as the sophistication of world citizenship. The resentment of the bigness and the accompanying centralization

is voiced in condemnation of City Hall. It is inevitable that the degree of centralization which robs the people of the right of choice can not continue to exist in a democratic society. Acceptance of governmental controls without retaining the basic principles of democracy (the responsibility) will inevitably lead to government by a few or a dictatorship.

In an effort to clarify our position, the town meetings of yesteryear are used as an example. Our forefathers made many decisions themselves in these meetings. They believed that the combined judgments of all the citizens were far stronger than those of an individual or of a small group.

What is lacking today is a sound basis for the individual's participation, hence the search for (1) official recognition and/or (2) identification with one or more existing organizations, even though their efforts in the past might have been unfruitful.

The reluctance or refusal of residents to participate in the proposed leadership group meetings might be due to some of the following findings:

1. Unfruitful efforts of many groups in the past.
2. Mistaking signs and symptoms of a problem for the problem itself.
3. The strength of our nomadic heritage resulting in emigration from Weequahic.
4. The ever-increasing maze of problems: crime, high taxes, etc.
5. The aversion to being changed.
6. Unpleasant conditions over which they have no control
7. The futility of bucking City Hall
8. The desire to pass the buck to professionals who get paid for it.

The next consideration was what effects, if any, this social action program had (1) the community of Weequahic and (2) on some of the residents of Weequahic.

There does not appear to be any evidence of community development resulting from the program.

There does appear to be some evidence of increased activity on the part of some of the residents in their efforts to do something about the situation. In this connection, there appears to be increased concern and activity of some organizations within Weequahic. However, the majority of people involved appear to be elected leaders (status group members) and the organizations referred to, appear to be controlled or greatly influenced by the same people.

There is no evidence whatsoever that any degree of success accompanied our efforts to bridge the gap between the residents of Weequahic and their elected leaders (the members of the status group)

Our next consideration was whether or not the results of this small and brief program of action research warranted further efforts to be expended on a larger and more extensive program based upon the same educational and philosophical principles.

We agreed that the results of this project would be most helpful in designing future programs of community development in Weequahic, in other communities of the City of Newark, and in communities throughout the United States.

The most significant factor, as we see it, is the readiness of some of the members of the status group, to assume responsibility and to participate in a program of adult education along the lines described by the Philosophical

Committee of the Adult Education Association of the United States. We would encourage attempts to obtain greater participation of community residents through a committee structure, possibly encouraging each member of the status group to organize his own committee. The assignments of the committees would consist of the exploration of various irritating issues, frequently mistaken for basic problems, and of the involvement of as many community residents as possible in the process.

There are two other responsibilities of the leaders of such a program which must not be overlooked:

1. The establishment of adequate two-way lines of communication to carry the results of these activities studies and feelings to the point at which decisions are made.
2. The protection of the rights of minority groups.

It is our hope that this report will eliminate the feeling, on the part of some individuals, that the consultants had a hidden agenda. Rather than a hidden agenda, we have a strong and deep-rooted conviction that only those who live in a community faced with the myriad of problems, that so many communities face today, can solve these problems. We do not believe that there is a panacea for all community problems, applicable to any or to all communities. No two people are exactly alike and, since communities are made up of people, no two communities are exactly alike. Another reason for this conviction of ours is our belief that individuals do not resist change they do resist being changed. The change must come from within, not super-imposed by "outside experts".

Special attention should be called to the outstanding cooperation we have received from the members of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations; Dan Anthony, the Executive Director; and Walter Chambers, the Assistant Director, throughout this program of action research.

Since the completion of this project, the contracting firm, Consultant Associates Corporation of Long Branch, New Jersey has become a subsidiary of the Dale, Elliott Company, Incorporated, of 400 Park Avenue, New York City. We believe that the able staff of specialists of the parent organization has broadened the scope of our services. Consultant Associates Corporation now is the Social Science, Research and Educational Division of the Dale, Elliott & Co., Inc. and Priscilla B. Ranschoff, Ed.D., President of Consultant Associates, is Vice-President of the Dale, Elliott Co., Inc. We maintain both the Long Branch and New York Offices.

Conclusions:

1. There is evidence of some decrease in tension and conflict in the Weequahic area accompanied by an increased cooperative effort on the part of some of the residents to identify and to solve their own community problems.
2. Various techniques and methods were used to neutralize the persistent mythology of:
 - a. Devaluation of property

"Many colored people keep their houses better than whites".
 - b. Panic and flight only solution

"I am not going to move from where I live. You have my vote. I will start a block movement".
 - c. Integrated neighborhoods lead to:
 - (1) Dangerous social intimacies such as dating and, eventually, intermarriage.
 - (2) Down-grading of our socio-economic status
3. It is interesting to note that no effort was made by the consultants, at any time, to give information regarding the validity or lack of validity of any of the feelings, beliefs or prejudices of group members. Instead, they concentrated on techniques and methods, depending upon the process of interaction to give the members of the group better insights. These techniques included:
 - a. Democratic (non-directive) discussion leadership
 - b. Buzz groups (small discussion groups with feed-back)
 - c. Sociodrama (role playing)

4. Exploration and experimentation with imaginative, different and untried approaches to the peaceful transition of a neighborhood have been conducted. Unquestionably, there was some trauma associated with the process. Some phases of the project were complete failures (the formation and the training of a group of natural leaders) while other phases appear to have been successful.
5. There appears to be a sufficient degree of success associated with the program to warrant further exploration and experimentation in this unique approach to community development.
6. The consultants recommend that this report be used as the basis for a request for funds, to be used for a larger scale program of social action research, from a foundation, from the City of Newark or from major industries and other business concerns in the Newark area.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla B. Ransohoff, Vice-President
Dale, Elliott & Company, Inc.
Long Branch, New Jersey